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NSC BRIEFING

EXPANDING SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN ANTARCTICA

- I. The USSR last year announced plans to expand its program of research in Antarctica.
 - A. These plans, an integral part of continuing long range Soviet study of earth as a whole, to gain eventual mastery over physical environment.
 - B. These plans also have additional objects which are practical.
 1. Eventually to displace the US as the pre-eminent Antarctic power;
 2. To strengthen Soviet rights in the subcontinent beyond any question;
 3. To secure freedom of access to any part of the area and thus to neutralize claims of other nations.
- II. Their plans for expanded post-IGY work include:
 - A. Setting up three new stations, two of which will be a permanent year-round installations. One seasonal post at the Pole of Inaccessability is already completed, one is now being set up in Queen Maude Land, and the third in the unclaimed sector will probably be set up next season.
 1. This latter station could become troublesome to us as it will be the first foreign encampment in the Unclaimed Sector where US interests have been strongest.
 2. Addition of these three stations will bring to nine the total number of Soviet arctic bases, (US has three major bases and 3 joint ones.) Four of Soviet bases will be year-round, 4 summer season only, and 1 a supply base.

3. The Soviets have turned over one of their bases to in a political maneuver to broaden bloc presence in the area and expand membership in the Special Committee for Antarctic Research which Poland wants to join.
- B. Two major transcontinental treks are scheduled, the first, to begin next season, will be calculated to better the recent British effort and to advertise the superiority of Soviet work in the interior.
 1. The emphasis on interior work is in part calculated to deprecate the claims of other countries which are for the most part based on a small amount of work in the coastal areas
- C. USSR's proposal for a vast international program to map the area may have significant scientific benefits for the USSR and enhance Soviet political position.
 1. Soviets are offering to map over a third of the area, suggesting use of their own aircraft to operate at 50,000 feet using newly developed aerial cameras.
 2. Past Soviet mapping and oceanographic surveys in this area have been by far the most extensive and comprehensive of any country within the short span of three seasons.
 3. As evidence of sophisticated activity, may increase Soviet rights over those US, particularly in Unclaimed Sector.
 4. May make Soviet scientific results more significant and useful since maps are basic tools to study of earth science data (continental characteristics, weather and climate, natural resources).
 5. Would give Soviets advantage in future satellite tracking

III. The Soviets have reorganized their ministries and Academy of Science to take care of these expanded post-IGY operations which will be propagandized to show their effort to be the greatest in magnitude and significance.

A. True or not, this claim ^{may} will be bolstered by such other developments as:

1. ^{Possible} Earth satellite launchings from the area--which will have a profoundly disquieting effect on southern hemisphere countries;
2. The recent completion of a scientific research submarine;
3. A three-fold expansion in their whaling fleet now underway.